

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT
IN
VIGO COUNTY**

**compiled by
League of Women Voters
of Vigo County
November 1989**

FOREWARD

The League of Women Voters is a unique, multi-issue, activist network that derives its strength from the energy and commitment of several hundred thousand members and supporters nationwide. It is a nonpartisan, political organization that encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy. The League is a force in public policy because it is based on sound, informed work at the grass-roots level.

Through this booklet, **Local Government in Vigo County**, the League of Women Voters of Vigo County hopes to facilitate citizen participation in local government. This booklet lists the various government entities in the area. Use it as you will. Perhaps you haven't known where or to whom to turn for a problem. Perhaps you're interested in getting involved, in being appointed to a board or commission. Or perhaps you're just curious about who or what is responsible.

The League of Women Voters of Vigo County is one of more than 1250 local Leagues throughout the country. Together with the 50 state Leagues and LWVs in the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, we comprise the League of Women Voters of the United States.

The LWV was founded in 1920. Its basic purposes are:

- to establish positions on public policy issues through members participation and agreement
- to take concerted actions that secure public policies consistent with League positions
- to enhance citizen participation in federal, state and local government decisions
- to increase citizen participation in the election process.

We think this booklet serves these purposes. We strive to educate and inform the public about local government.

For more information on the League of Women Voters of Vigo County, please contact the resource desk at the Vigo County Public Library (232-1113) for the name and telephone number of the current LWV Vigo County President.

Without the hard work of several people this booklet would never have been possible. Thanks first and foremost should go to Genevieve Reisner who organized, oversaw, and coordinated the project. Other writers and compilers are Rose Marie Baer, Geraldine Conaty, Janette Devlin, Marion Gates, Carolyn Henson, Maryalyce McDavid, Barbara Puckett and Carolyn Toops. Special thanks also to Will Engellend, editor, and Bob Watson, word processor.

INTRODUCTION

In Indiana the major local government units are townships, towns, cities and counties. Election districts and special districts for such services as flood control, hospitals, harbors, parks and sanitation are superimposed on these units. To complicate matters further, laws are often passed by the General Assembly that are "special legislation" in that they apply only to certain cities, counties, townships or school corporations.

An example of overlapping units is provided in our own locality. Terre Haute, the county seat of Vigo County, is in Harrison Township, one of twelve townships in the county. As a result of the annexation of all of Harrison Township by the city in 1957, the boundaries of city and township coincided. Since then parts of other townships have been annexed by the city. Residents in these annexed areas receive certain city services, such as fire and police protection and trash disposal. However, each township government is responsible for other services for the entire township: e.g. poor relief and assessment of taxable property.

As a resident of Vigo County you may participate in local government in many ways. The minimum would be as a taxpayer and voter. The degree to which you participate is your decision. Many choices are open to you: to run for office; to accept an appointment to a board or commission; to keep yourself informed by attending meetings of governing bodies such as the city council or school board.

We hope this booklet will help you better to understand the many branches of government in Vigo County.

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THE BASIS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT: VOTERS, ELECTIONS AND PARTY STRUCTURE

VOTERS

Unless disqualified by law, every adult citizen of Vigo County has the opportunity to vote in both primary and general elections. However, certain requirements must be met before actual voting can be done.

Eligibility

A voter must be 18 years of age, a citizen of the United States, a resident of Vigo County and be registered to vote.

Registration

Place - a citizen may register in the office of the Board of Voter Registration, at designated registration sites, or by deputized registration officials in homes.

Requirements - an individual must be at least 18 years old at the time of the next general or municipal election and must have resided continuously in the precinct in which the voting will take place for at least thirty days prior to election. Registration is permanent so long as the voter participates in elections; changes in name or address require a change in registration.

Time frame - Registration may be done from 30 days after an election to 30 days before an election.

Absentee registration - if a voter is absent from the county during registration periods because of legally specified reasons, absentee registration may be done through the Board of Voter Registration.

ELECTIONS

Voting

Voting is done at a polling place in each precinct. The location may vary from year to year. Information about polling places may be obtained from the county clerk's office, or the political party headquarters, or the Board of Voter Registration.

Absentee voting may be done if the polls are inaccessible or if the voter expects to be: out of the county, confined because of illness or injury or caring for a confined person in a private residence. Absentee voting is supervised by the office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court (county clerk).

Supervision

Elections are supervised by the County Election Board, composed of the Clerk of the Circuit Court and one member of each major party recommended by the party chairman and appointed by the Clerk of the Circuit Court. The County Election Board appoints the precinct election officials who conduct the elections in each precinct.

Primary Elections

Primary elections are held the first Tuesday after the first Monday in May of each year in which a general elections is held. The primary is a party election and voting is done for candidates in that party only. The voter votes for: 1) a precinct committeeman 2) delegates to the state party convention and 3) candidates for national, state and local offices. In presidential election years, preference for a presidential nominee is also registered.

GENERAL ELECTIONS

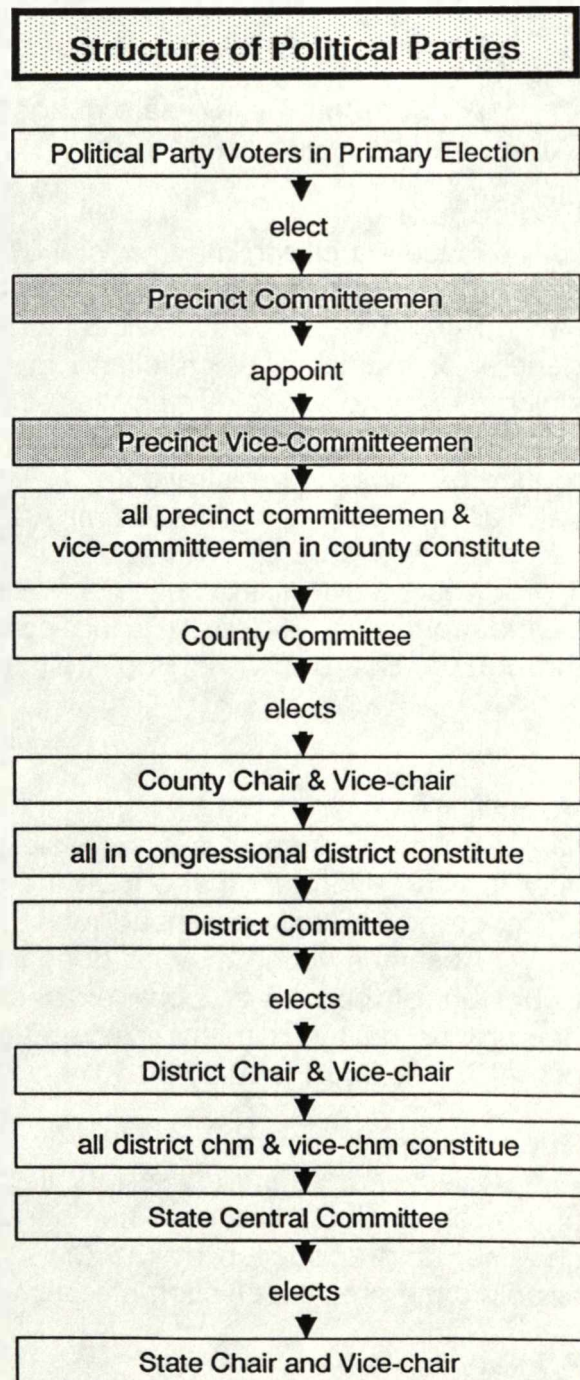
General Elections are held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November in each even numbered year.

PARTY STRUCTURE

Although the precinct does not serve as a unit of government, it is the unit cell of the political party organization. The precinct committeemen and vice committeemen form the basis of the party structure.

The precinct committeemen and vice committeemen must be of opposite sexes, as must the chair and vice chair of the county, district and state.

The accompanying chart shows the way the political parties are organized from the precinct to the state level.



COUNTY GOVERNMENT

The framework of county government in Indiana is the same, in general terms, but there are wide variations in practice. Larger counties have elaborate structures, departments, agencies, boards and commissions. Smaller counties have simpler, less elaborate structures.

The basic characteristics of county government are:

- (1) there is no single chief executive
- (2) separation of executive and legislative powers is not clear-cut, as in state and national government.
- (3) counties may exercise any powers not specifically denied to them or reserved to the state, thus giving them a measure of home rule.

Counties are responsible for the administration of county governmental affairs, with jurisdiction coextensive with county lines. Administrative duties are divided among various elected or appointed county officials. The Board of County Commissioners has both executive and legislative powers, while the County Council is a legislative body with the major responsibility for fiscal affairs, including taxing and spending.

The property tax is the principal source of revenue for Vigo County. Other sources are state and federal funding, investment income and miscellaneous.

ELECTED COUNTY OFFICIALS (4-year terms)

County Commissioners

Three members, elected from separate commissioner districts by the county as a whole, on staggered basis, form the Board of County Commissioners. The commissioners have combined executive and legislative powers. They control county property, supervise construction and maintenance of roads and bridges, and have certain election functions, including the establishment of precincts, the providing of polling places and the necessary polling equipment.

County Council

Of the seven members of the County Council, four are elected from separate councilmanic districts, and three at large, by the county as a whole. The council controls the county's purse strings. It approves budgets, sets tax rates and makes additional appropriations.

Auditor

The auditor is the county's bookkeeper. By virtue of the office, the auditor serves as secretary of the Board of County Commissioners, the County Council and the Board of Review.

Treasurer

The treasurer collects taxes for the county and for all the governmental units in the county.

Assessor

The assessor determines the assessed value of property, which is the basis of property tax collections. This involves working with the township assessors and trustee/assessors.

Surveyor

The surveyor keeps records of all section corners in the county, and the legal survey record book. He may supervise construction of drains.

Prosecutor

The prosecutor represents the state in prosecuting violations of state law. He ultimately decides whether to take a criminal case to court.

Clerk

The official title of this position is Clerk of the Circuit Court; however, the term "county clerk" is commonly used. The clerk's main function is to handle court records. Other duties include issuing marriage licenses. By virtue of the office, the clerk serves as secretary of the County Election Board and the Board of Canvassers.

Coroner

The coroner's main job is to determine what caused a person to die when the manner of death is not explained.

Recorder

As the county's record keeper, the recorder "records" deeds, mortgage liens, leases and bankruptcies.

Sheriff

As the county's police chief, the sheriff enforces the law in the county. With a merit board, the sheriff selects deputies or county police officers. The sheriff runs the county jail. As an officer of the court, the sheriff has tax collecting duties.

APPOINTED COUNTY OFFICIALS IN VIGO COUNTY

Highway Superintendent
Highway Engineer
County Attorney
Assistant County Attorney
Health Officer
County Home Administrator
Park Superintendent
Director of Data Processing
Director of Air Pollution Control
Director of Civil Defense
Executive Director of Area Planning
Executive Director of Convention and Tourism
Building Inspector
Inspector of Weights and Measures
Cooperative Extension Agent

ADMINISTRATIVE AGENCIES AND BOARDS**Vigo County Health Department**

The seven-member County Board of Health appoints the Health Officer (who must hold an unlimited license to practice medicine). The health department enforces city and county health ordinances and state health laws. Specific programs include:

keeping of vital statistics; vector control; inspection of sanitation, waste, sewage, water supply; communicable disease control; public health nursing and venereal disease control.

Air Pollution Control

An eleven-member board selects the air pollution control director, whose duties include monitoring air quality and enforcing regulations.

County Park and Recreation Department

A seven-member board is responsible for the operation of this department. A superintendent, qualified in the field of parks and recreation, carries out the program of the department.

Area Planning Commission

The 14-member commission's primary responsibility is to formulate and recommend adoption of plans for community betterment. The commission appoints an executive director of the Area Plan Department.

Convention and Tourism Bureau

A five-member commission appoints an executive director of this agency. The bureau's chief function is to promote Vigo County with respect to tourism and conventions. Funds come from the 2% hotel/motel tax.

Board of Review

This five-member board is composed of the county assessor, auditor and treasurer (all ex officio) and two property owners of opposite political parties appointed by the county commissioners. The assessor is president of the board and the auditor serves as secretary. The board decides appeals of property assessments and reviews assessments to correct any errors. The board's job is to make sure that assessments reflect value on a consistent basis.

Board of Tax Adjustment

This seven-member board reviews budgets passed by all units in the county, and may revise or reduce budgets but not increase them. The county commissioners appoint four members. The county council appoints one of its members to serve, as does the Vigo County school board. Usually the city controller represents the city.

Board of Voter Registration

This board oversees the registration of voters. Two members, one from each political party, are appointed by the Circuit Court Judge. The Clerk of the Circuit Court serves as chair.

Election Board and Board of Canvassers

The Clerk of the Circuit Court and two persons appointed by the clerk, each representing one of the two major political parties, and nominated by the county party chairmen, serve on these two boards. The Election Board prepares and distributes ballots and appoints precinct election officials. The Board of Canvassers has the duty of canvassing votes and certifying the election returns to the Secretary of State.

Redevelopment Commission

This five-member board is appointed by the county commissioners. The purpose

of the commission is to promote and encourage the proper use of land within the county, to best serve the interests of the county and its residents, both from the standpoint of human needs and economic values and to improve blighted areas.

Hulman Regional Airport Authority

Six members (three appointed by the mayor, three by the county commissioners) make up the governing body of the county-wide airport district and appoint the airport director. The airport authority administers, maintains, operates and develops the publicly owned airport.

VIGO COUNTY COURT SYSTEM

Vigo County has five courts: one Circuit Court, two Superior Courts and two County Courts. The Circuit Court, the 43rd Judicial Circuit, was established by the Indiana Constitution. Superior Courts were created by the General Assembly as the need arose. Each superior court is defined by the statute which created it.

The General Assembly created the County Courts in 1975. Changes have been enacted to the County Court Law each year since 1975. The County Courts replaced the Justice of the Peace System.

The judges of these five courts are elected for six year terms.

Courts handle disputes between people or between people and the state. They have original jurisdiction and are courts of record. Decisions of these courts may be appealed to the Indiana Court of Appeals.

A defendant who is charged with murder or a felony above a Class D may be tried by a twelve person jury. All other felonies, misdemeanor and the civil cases use a six person jury.

A large portion of the salaries of these judges and certain court staff are paid by the state of Indiana from general revenues. The county provides the remainder of the necessary funds.

In addition to the five courts mentioned above, a sixth court, the Terre Haute City Court, serves county residents. For a description of this court, see the section on city government.

COUNTY COMMISSIONER AND COUNCILMANIC DISTRICTS

The outline maps of Vigo County, showing township boundary lines, were provided by the Area Planning Department.

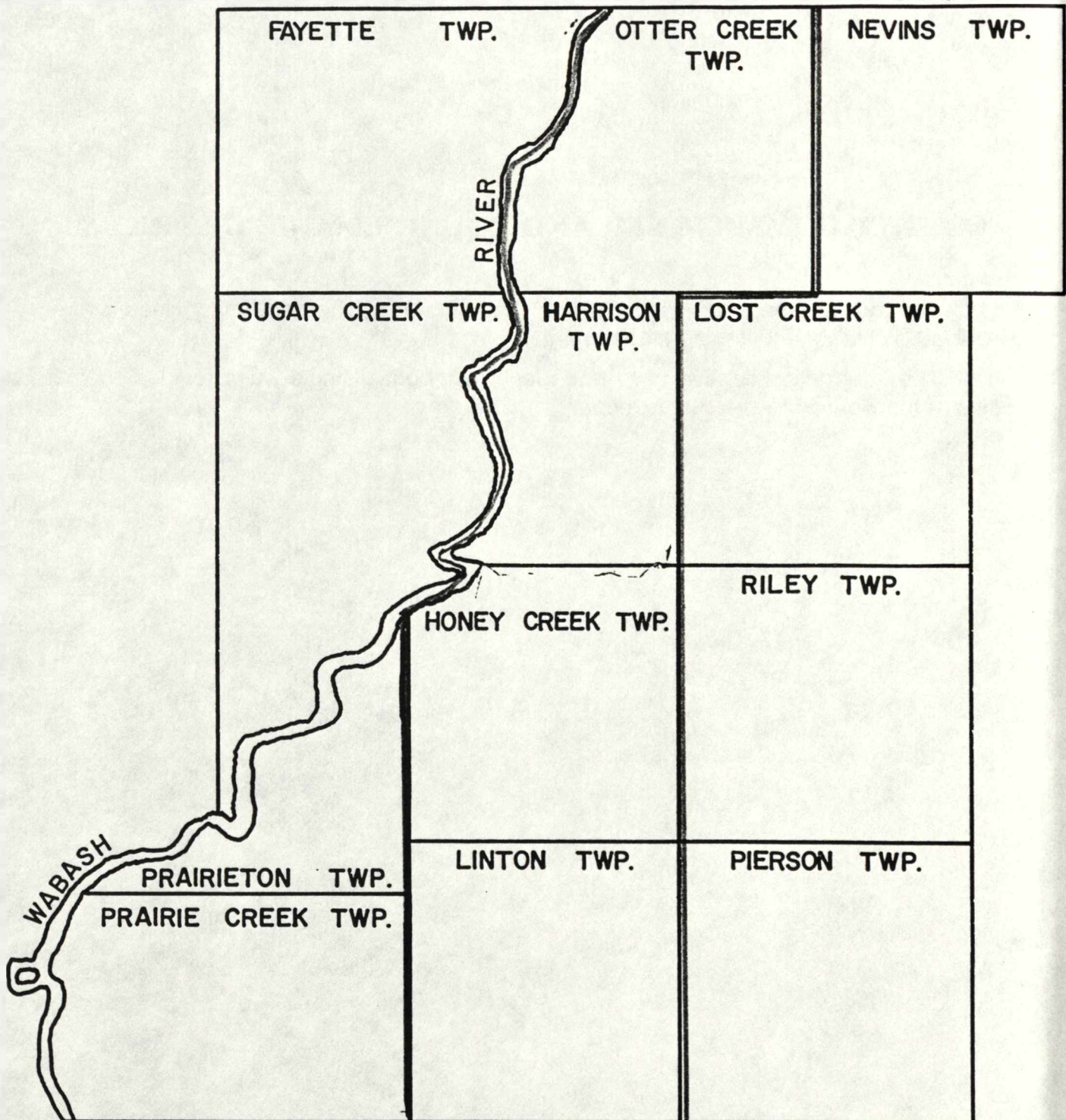
The information relative to boundaries for both districts was provided by the office of the Board of Voter Registration.

COUNTY COMMISSIONER DISTRICTS

First District - Nevins, Lost Creek, Riley and Pierson Twps.

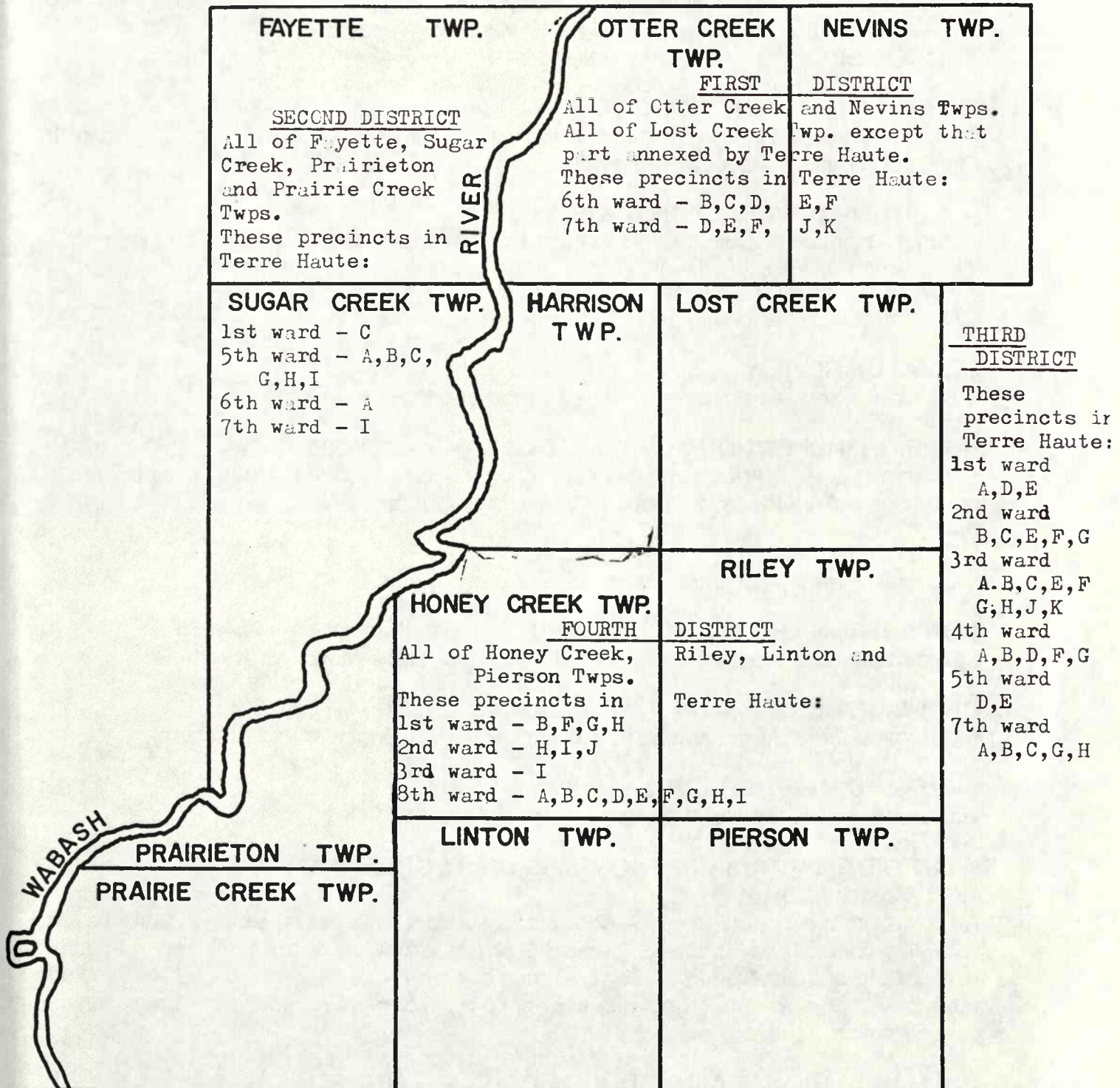
Second District - Otter Creek, Harrison, Honey Creek, and Linton Twps.

Third District - Fayette, Sugar Creek, Prairieton, and Prairie Creek Twps.



Prepared by THE AREA PLANNING DEPARTMENT
for VIGO COUNTY

COUNTY COUNCILMANIC DISTRICTS



Prepared by THE AREA PLANNING DEPARTMENT
for VIGO COUNTY

APPOINTIVE AUTHORITIES FOR VIGO COUNTY BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

The following boards are appointed by elected officials and may be reached through the office of the appointing body.

Vigo County Commissioners
Courthouse
238-8000

Mayor's Office
17 Harding Avenue
232-9467

Vigo County Sheriff
Courthouse Annex
238-8226

AIR POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD 201 Cherry 238-8433
6 Commissioners' Appointments; 1 County Councilman; 1 School Board Member; 1 City Councilman; 5 Mayor Appointments.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE BOARD
1 Commissioners' Appointment; 1 County Council Appointment; 1 Mayor Appointment.

AREA PLAN COMMISSION 238-8354
6 Commissioners' Appointments; 5 Mayor Appointments.

BOARD OF REVIEW
2 Commissioners' Appointments - one Democrat one Republican.

BUILDING INSPECTION ADVISORY BOARD 238-8365
5 Commissioners' Appointments; one each - home builders trade, 1 supplier, 1 contractor, 1 Area Plan Commission, 1 from building trade union.

CEMETERY BOARD
5 Commissioners' Appointments; 4 Mayor Appointments.

CONVENTION AND TOURISM BOARD 643 Wabash 234-5555
2 Commissioners' Appointments; 2 County Council and 1 Mayor Appointment.

DRAINAGE BOARD
5 Commissioners' Appointments (2 Commissioners, 1 Engineer and 2 Others).

SHERIFF'S MERIT BOARD
Sheriff's Appointments; 2 elected by Deputies.

WEST CENTRAL INDIANA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT
1718 Wabash 238-1561

A not for profit corporation which consists of 36 Board Members, six each from the six following counties: Vigo, Clay, Putnam, Sullivan, Vermillion and Parke. The mayor of each of the counties' principal city is a member by virtue of the office. Other elected officials and person concerned with economic development comprise the board which varies from time to time.

HULMAN REGIONAL AIRPORT AUTHORITY 877-2524
3 Mayor's Appointments; 3 County Council Appointments.

CITY GOVERNMENT

According to population Terre Haute is classified as a second class city under Indiana law. It has the authority to annex more territory if an ordinance to that effect is passed by the City Council. Property owners may appeal such annexations and may also petition the city to be annexed.

GOVERNING BODY

City Council

All second class cities in Indiana have a Common Council, usually referred to as the City Council. It is composed of nine representatives of which six are elected from districts in the city and three are elected at large. Elections are for four year terms and are held in odd numbered years just prior to presidential election years. Vacancies between elections are filled by a caucus of the precinct committeemen of the same political party as the former member. An Independent is replaced by vote of the remaining members of the council. Meetings are held at least once each month or at times required by the local council rules. Special meetings are called by the mayor. All official meetings are public. The council elects one of its own members as president. The city clerk serves as clerk of the council.

The General Assembly has granted the following powers to the City Council:

1. Corporate and procedural powers - a city or town shall have power to establish and operate a government for the purpose of carrying out its powers and functions.
2. Liability and indemnity
3. Fees and charges
4. Special proceedings
5. Noxious, dangerous or chemical activity
6. Health or sanitation
7. Roads and traffic
8. Watercourses
9. Planning, zoning and construction of buildings
10. Subterranean power
11. Air
12. Crafts and business
13. Public facilities
14. Public safety
15. Additional powers in a variety of areas

ELECTED CITY OFFICIALS

Mayor

The Mayor is elected for a term of four years and is the chief executive officer; the salary is set by the City Council. The mayor's responsibilities include:

1. Executing and supervising enforcement of the ordinances of the city and the laws of the state.
2. Appointing the heads of various departments of city government and suspending or removing such people from office when necessary; making other appointments as provided by law.

3. Approving or disapproving ordinances passed by the City Council. The mayor may veto any ordinance.
4. Setting the salaries of all appointive city officers and employees and of departmental and institutional heads excepting members of the city police and fire departments subject to approval by the City Council.
5. Performing various other duties necessary to efficient city government.

City Clerk

The City Clerk is also elected every four years; the salary is set by the City Council. The duties of this officer are to:

1. Keep records of the City Council meetings
2. Compile city ordinances
3. Retain charge of city records and books
4. Retain the city seal
5. Issue certain types of licenses
6. Serve as clerk of the City Council
7. Serve as clerk of the City Court.

City Judge

The City Judge is elected every four years; the salary is set by the City Council. The judge presides over the city court and hears specific classes of cases assigned by law to city courts.

ADMINISTRATIVE AGENCIES OF CITY GOVERNMENT

City departments that exist because of state statute are headed by a person appointed by the mayor and approved by the statutorily established board or commission for that department.

Department of Finance

The Department of Finance is directed by the city controller. This department is responsible for managing the finances and accounts of the city.

Department of Law

The City Attorney directs this department. It manages the city's law business and the legal affairs of each department within the city government.

Engineering Department

This department is directed by the city engineer and is in charge of the technical aspects of all construction projects undertaken by the city.

Board of Public Works and Safety

The city controller, the city attorney and the city engineer compose this three-member board. It is responsible for two main functions of city government:

1. Providing police and fire protection
2. Constructing and maintaining streets, sidewalks, sewers and sanitary facilities.

To carry out these duties is the responsibility of the police department, the fire department, the street department and the sewage disposal (water treatment) department respectively.

Department of Redevelopment

Created by the City Council, this department's duties are:

1. To promote and encourage proper land use and improve blighted areas within the city.
2. To encourage industry to locate within the area.

Terre Haute Housing Authority

This agency was also established by the City Council. It supervises and maintains all public housing within the city.

OTHER SELF-EXPLANATORY AGENCIES**The Park Department****The Public Transit Department****The Cemetery Department****The Board of Zoning Appeals****Building Inspection Department****Area Planning**

Terre Haute joins with the county in operating the Area Plan Department.

Board of Health

Terre Haute is mandated by law to participate in the County Health Department.

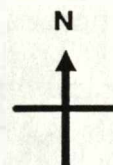
FUNDING

Property tax is the major source of revenue with state and federal aid a secondary source. Budgets are prepared by the mayor and reviewed by the City Council. The state board of accounts checks budgets and expenditures. Public hearings are held at each stage of the procedure. Once completed, the budget is sent to the county auditor who applies the proper tax rate for each taxing unit.

TOWNSHIP GOVERNMENT

The twelve townships in Vigo County are civil corporations which administer poor relief, assess taxable property, and perform other legal and fiscal roles. The twelve are, in geographical order:

Fayette	Otter Creek	Nevins
Sugar Creek	Harrison	Lost Creek
Prairieton	Honey Creek	Riley
Prairie Creek	Linton	Pierson



Township Trustee

The township trustee is elected to a four-year term and must be a resident of the township in which he holds office. He is the chief administrative officer and serves as clerk and treasurer.

As "Keeper of the Poor" he provides relief in kind, such as groceries or services, but not cash. U.S. government surplus food commodities are distributed through the townships. The trustee arranges for relief applicants who are in good health to provide volunteer hours of labor for non-profit agencies. The trustee may employ investigators of poor relief applicants within prescribed limits. Harrison Township has two investigators; the other townships in Vigo County have one each.

Other responsibilities are to defend the township in legal actions, purchase and care for the land for cemeteries, eradicate weeds, destroy marijuana, build line fences, serve as a notary public, and pay claims for rabies shots or for damage to livestock by dogs. Records must be kept of all these activities, and annual reports must be published.

Township Board

The three members of this board must be freeholders and qualified voters. They are elected for four-year terms. Their duties are to adopt the township budget, fix the tax rates, authorize the incurring of indebtedness, approve township contracts, select depositories for township funds, and issue bonds, if necessary. In some townships, the trustee and board also provide fire protection for the township residents.

Township Assessor

The township assessor is elected for a four-year term. (When the population is less than 8000, the trustee acts as assessor.) He is instructed by and responsible to the county assessor. The assessor's duty is to place an assessed valuation for taxing purposes on real property and motor vehicles, aircraft, boats, etc., within the township, and to assess and collect the dog tax. He employs deputies and assistants.

Funding

Township government is funded by property taxes. Dog-related expenses are funded by part of the dog tax.

OTHER GOVERNMENTAL DIVISIONS

VIGO COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

The responsibility of this district is to promote wise use of land, water, woodland and wildlife resources for the present and future.

The district is managed by a five member board of supervisors. Three of them are elected by the members of the district (land owners with holdings comprising 10 acres or more) and two are appointed by the State Soil Conservation Committee. Soil and water conservation districts are the initial sponsors of small water shed projects or conservancy districts.

PURDUE UNIVERSITY COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

The Cooperative Extension Service is responsible to all citizens of Indiana. The extension's primary purpose is to help people identify problems and find solutions to improve their homes, families, farms, businesses and communities.

Vigo County Cooperative Extension Services are carried out by extension agents who are staff members of Purdue University. These extension agents are responsible to local people through the County Advisory Board and the County Extension Board.

Operational funds come from a combination of federal, state and county monies.

TOWN GOVERNMENT

The three incorporated towns in Vigo County are Riley, Seelyville and West Terre Haute. Their elections are held in odd numbered years preceding the presidential election.

The elected town officers are the Board of Town Trustees, composed of three members. One is elected from each ward, but chosen by the voters of the entire town, and a clerk-treasurer. They serve 4-year terms.

The Board of Town Trustees elects its own president and has legislative and administrative powers to provide necessary services for its residents.

VIGO COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE

The Vigo County Department of Public Welfare provides welfare services for county residents under direction of and in conjunction with the Indiana Department of Public Welfare. All staff members are under the Indiana merit system. The merit system establishes minimum qualifications, salary range and duties for each position. There is no local welfare board.

Eligibility for assistance varies according to the program and is determined by Indiana law within the framework of federal legislation.

The Vigo County Department of Public Welfare administers these programs:

Aid To Families With Dependent Children

Grants are made to children in their homes when they are deprived of parental support because of the death, absence or incapacity of a parent; such grants may include a needy relative. A Work Incentive Program for AFDC recipients provides for help with employment or job training.

Child Support and Parent Locator Program

This program (1) assures that each child for whom an AFDC grant is approved

will receive a court order for support (2) assures the opportunity to have paternity established by law to any child born out of wedlock (3) assures that court-ordered child support is promptly paid including any arrearages.

Non-AFDC persons may apply for Child Support and Parent Locator Services for a nominal fee.

Child Welfare Services

This department licenses child care facilities, provides home based social services, investigates child abuse and neglect and seeks to help maintain and strengthen family life. When necessary, out-of-home care is arranged for the child under court order. Adoption services are offered when appropriate.

Homemaker Services

This program is designed to avoid foster child care. It places a supervised homemaker where such service is needed to strengthen, maintain or preserve the home for minor children.

Services For Crippled Children

Medical and rehabilitative services are provided for children under age 21 who suffer from congenital physical defects or acquired disabilities when the parents are unable to pay for treatment.

OTHER SERVICES

ASSISTANCE TO RESIDENTS IN COUNTY HOMES

EYE TREATMENTS: eye care and general medical care if called for by diagnosis

FOOD STAMP PROGRAM: designed to increase the food purchasing power of public assistance recipients, the unemployed and under-employed and low income households

HOSPITAL CARE FOR THE INDIGENT: financial assistance for emergency health care in an Indiana hospital to residents and non-residents who become ill or injured in Indiana

MEDICAID: medical care for persons eligible for the other welfare assistance programs. Pregnant women who meet AFDC criteria or whose income is below a certain level and children who meet certain age and income criteria may also receive medical care. Medicare Part A and B premiums, deductibles and co-insurance may be paid for persons who meet income criteria.

THE VIGO COUNTY SCHOOL CORPORATION

The Vigo County School Corporation administers all public schools, grades K - 12, in the county. It is responsible for providing and maintaining the necessary facilities, hiring and discharging all personnel, setting salaries, providing pupil transportation, determining the academic curriculum and planning and executing other activities and services.

Governance and Administration

The Vigo County School Corporation is governed by a seven-member, non-partisan, Board of School Trustees that is elected for four-year staggered terms at the primary elections. Although the county is divided into school board districts to insure adequate geographic representation, voting for all board members is done on a county-wide basis. Board meetings are open to the public; minutes of the meetings are also open to the public.

Board members must be qualified voters, at least 18 years of age and a resident of their geographic district for at least one year prior to election. Although they receive a nominal stipend, their services are essentially those of a volunteer.

The board has the responsibility to establish policies by which the schools are operated. It appoints the Superintendent of Schools who acts as executive officer in administering board policies. The superintendent also acts as an advisor in keeping the board informed of the needs and progress of the schools.

Specialized Programs

Additional, specialized educational opportunities offered by the Vigo County School Corporation are:

Adult education: a wide range of evening courses for both high school credit and special interests. Courses are scheduled at all three high schools.

The Washington Alternative School: a high school program for parenting students including nursery care and developmental activities while parents attend classes. Other students whose needs cannot adequately be met by the regular school system are also served by this school.

Special education: instructional programs, related services, and unique materials which modify, supplement, support or are in place of the standard educational program of the public schools in order to meet the unique needs of eligible handicapped students. The Covered Bridge Special Education District represents the combined efforts of the Rockville Community School Corporation, the south Vermillion Community School Corporation, the Southwest Park Community School Corporation and the Vigo County School Corporation. Programs are provided for all handicapping conditions as identified in Public Law 94-142 or Indiana's Rule S-1.

Funding

The Vigo County School Corporation is supported by state funding and local county government funding, primarily property tax funds. The calendar year budget and school tax rate is adopted in August by the Board of School Trustees and reviewed in September by the County Tax Adjustment Board.

VIGO COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

The public library was created for the benefit of the citizens of Vigo County and is supported by them. Its purposes are:

- to help meet the educational, cultural, informational and recreational needs of the community by providing access to materials and information in a variety of formats and to furnish equipment essential to their use;
- to help improve the quality of life by offering materials, services and programs not readily accessible elsewhere in the community;
- to provide qualified staff to assist in the use of the full range of library resources;
- to take a leadership role among agencies and institutions in meeting the needs and promoting the well being of the community.

Governance and Administration

The Vigo County Public Library is governed by a seven-member board of trustees. Three of these members are appointed by the Vigo County School Board; two by the Vigo County Commissioners; two by the Vigo County Council. Board members serve without remuneration. Board meetings are open to the public. The library board selects the director who is responsible to it for the operation of the library.

Facilities

- The Main Library - One Library Square
- Meadows Branch - The Meadows Shopping Center
- Plaza North Branch - Plaza North Shopping Center
- South Branch - Southland Shopping Center
- West Terre Haute Branch - 626 National Avenue, West Terre Haute
- The Mediamobile - serves various institutions and makes regularly scheduled community stops throughout the county

Resources

The library supplements its own resources through membership in two organizations that may be utilized for interlibrary loans:

1. The Stone Hills Area Library Services Authority, a regional library cooperative of ten counties in west central Indiana.
2. Indiana Cooperative Library Services Authority, a computer network for libraries that accesses materials in libraries throughout the United States.

Funding

Funds to operate the library come primarily from county property taxes. The library board determines the tax rate within the parameters set by Indiana law. The board and the director together prepare a yearly budget that is reviewed by the County Tax Adjustment Board.

The compilers of this publication have made every effort to provide correct, up-to-date information. However, the structure of local government changes frequently. Therefore, the user is encouraged to contact the appropriate governmental unit for more information.

Listed below are three publications that are up-dated yearly. They may be used as additional sources of information. All three are available at the Vigo County Public Library.

Here Is Your Indiana Government

published by
Indiana Chamber of Commerce
One North Capital, Suite 200
Indianapolis IN 46204

Roster of State and Local Officials of the State of Indiana

compiled by
State Board of Accounts
912 State Office Building
Indianapolis IN 46204-2281

Annual Report

Taxpayer's Association of Vigo County
321 Ohio Street
Terre Haute IN 47807